

Appl. No. 10/785,371

Replacement Abstract

**METHOD FOR MAINTAINING OPERABILITY OF A FLEXIBLE, SELF
CONFORMING, PRINTED CIRCUIT BOARD SUPPORT SYSTEM**

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Abstract of the Disclosure

A method is disclosed for maintaining a reliable operation of a flexible, self-conforming support system. The self-conforming support system utilizes a plurality of pins that move vertically within a series of apertures. The motion of the pins can be hindered with unwarranted material becoming lodged between the pins and the respective aperture. One scenario where this is highly probable is when using the self-conforming support system for supporting Printed Circuit Boards during a solder paste application process. The present invention utilizes a protective collar to deflect any excess solder paste from becoming lodged between any of the pins and the respective aperture. The collar is essentially an umbrella, and can be of a molded material, a pliant material, or machined into the pins. The collar can further include a pliant top which also protects the Printed Circuit Board from the pins.

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